

**ATTENTION GULF COAST BIRDERS:  
YOUR HELP NEEDED TO RESPOND TO THE OIL SPILL CRISIS**

Audubon has been deluged by requests and registrations from volunteers seeking to respond to the growing oil spill crisis in the Gulf of Mexico. There are many ways to help, but now birders can provide vital information to aid the short and long term response.

Audubon is working with the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology to recruit citizen scientists to help document bird distribution at Gulf coast sites, and the effects of the oil spill.

We encourage birders along the Gulf coast to record their observations of birds and submit this information to [www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org), a real-time, online checklist program. This vital documentation of the location and abundance of birds will help us identify high priority areas for protection and restoration as the oil comes ashore. Documenting site use by birds as the situation evolves will also help Audubon and Cornell scientists assess the effects of this spill on Gulf coast habitat. This is critical to providing a sound foundation for restoration and long-term protection.

The eBird team is developing tools that will allow us to feed live data from birders into educational material on the spill.

***Your efforts can make an important contribution. Please help!***

**Note:** Be sure that your observation activities pose no danger to nesting birds and other wildlife, or to yourself. Please do not disturb birds or damage habitat when surveying birds. It is critical that birders stay out of nesting areas for plovers, shorebirds, terns, wading birds and other colonial nesters. Counting them from a distance can still provide valuable information on the importance of these sections of the gulf coast. And for your own protection, leave the area at once if you smell or see oil.

For the initiative protocol and directions on signing up for ebird, go to:  
<http://ebird.org/content/ebird/news/survey-gulf-coast-birds>

Also, visit [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org) for more on spill developments and Audubon's conservation response.

**About eBird:** eBird has revolutionized the way that the birding community reports and accesses information about birds. Launched in 2002 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, eBird provides rich data sources for basic information on bird abundance and distribution at a variety of spatial and temporal scales.

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